

VZCZCXYZ0008
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHSG #1250 3581407
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 241406Z DEC 09
FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 0478
INFO RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
RHMFISS/HQ USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL
RUCPDO/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHINGTON DC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DC
RUEHAC/AMEMBASSY ASUNCION
RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
RUEHBU/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS
RUEHMN/AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA
RUEHQT/AMEMBASSY QUITO
RUEHSG/AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

UNCLAS SANTIAGO 001250

SIPDIS
STATE FOR R/MR, I/PP, WHA/BSC, WHA/PDA, INR/IAA

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [ECON](#) [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [SNAR](#) [EFIN](#) [CI](#)
SUBJECT: Santiago Dec. 24 media report

Lead Story

[¶1.](#) Christmas sales are up 10% compared to 2008 and reached levels prior to the fall of Lehman Brothers, according to the National Chamber of Commerce (Conservative, independent La Tercera, 12/24).

Former President Frei's Death

[¶2.](#) The Supreme Court's second Room has asked to see the files of the investigation of former President Eduardo Frei's death before dictating a resolution regarding the appeal for legal protection filed by the four individuals charged in Frei's homicide. Asked about the court's reasons for the request, the president of the Second Room Nibaldo Segura said it has to do with questions about "accountability, the crime, and facts. Everything" (Conservative, influential El Mercurio, 12/24).

Chile - Bolivia

[¶3.](#) President Bachelet will travel to Bolivia on January 22 for Evo Morales' swearing-in ceremony (El Mercurio, 12/24).

Local Politics

[¶4.](#) The president of the Workers Central Union (CUT), Arturo Martinez, said that the Bachelet administration "has been the worst of all Concertacion administrations with regard to labor issues." The reason, he said, are the series of unresolved issues. "The labor defense project never went to Congress, or the creation of a State Pension Fund for workers, labor reforms to strengthen collective negotiations, or financing of union training.... Bachelet felt more comfortable traveling with entrepreneurs abroad (to look for markets)," said Martinez with regret (El Mercurio, 12/24).

[¶5.](#) Column by University of Notre Dame professor J. Samuel Valenzuela on the presidential election in Chile: "In the first

presidential round... one thing stands out and that is Marco Enriquez-Ominami's relative victory Where did Enriquez-Ominami's votes come from? ... Easy. The first presidential round was a de facto Concertacion primary.... The massive turnout for Enriquez-Ominami could become a victory and have a true long-lasting potential if he were to stay in the Concertacion, which is where the votes and the party that made it possible for him to take off as a congressman are rooted.... Enriquez-Ominami could become a key element in the future of the Concertacion. But unless he is part of the coalition and of a party that enables him to act within that coalition, he will become a fallen Phoenix" (La Tercera, 12/24).
SIMONS